President's Message

Chris Brown, a member of the Human Ecology Foundation (Ottawa Branch) has been actively seeking recognition of Environmental Hypersensitivity from a range of public officials from all political parties.

Largely due to his actions, Sheila Copps, Liberal Health Critic, has issued a press release recognizing the problems of persons with Environmental Hypersensitivity and the Minister of Health and Welfare, the Honourable Jake Epp, has acknowledged privately in a letter to Chris, his support for the concept that some people have a problem with hypersensitivity to chemicals.

Nevertheless, the Department of National Health and Welfare has persistently declined to acknowledge environmental hypersensitivities. In response to questioning by the Chairman of the House of Commons Committee on the Health Care System and Its Funding on June 22, 1988, Dr. A. J. Liston, Assistant Deputy Minister, Health Protection Branch said, "We (the department) are not denying that individuals can have adverse.. ..or environmental sensitivity type of exposure or reactions."

However Dr. Liston also said that he is of the view that the management of the condition is in large part the responsibility of medical practice which is under provincial rather than federal jurisdication. "Responsibility for comprehensive policies in the treatment of idiosyncratic reactions resides in the provinces."

Dr. Liston said that the role of the federal government is to control chemicals, control how much is released into the environment, to try to prevent....the contamination of the environment, of the home, of drinking water, of food, of a variety of commodities we come in contact with. At another point Dr. Liston mentioned that there is a "continuum" and that if the federal government could prevent chemicals from entering the environment then presumably fewer individuals would be injured.

The Human Ecology Foundation also submitted a brief on March 30, 1988, reference to which is made in "On Being Heard" elsewhere in this issue of ECO-SENSE. The Committee contributing to the brief co-ordinated by myself and Lynda Brooks, also included Fred Light, Kitty and John Nelms.

In the next issue we will be discussing further our initiatives to obtain compensation from governments, provincial health insurances plans, and supplementary medical and health benefit plans offered by employers.

Sincerely,
Anne Castle

WE INVITE YOU TO JOIN US

Membership in the Human Ecology Foundation of Canada includes a subscription to the Foundation 's Quarterly magazine and Branch publications, which cover the latest developments in prevention and treatment of environmental illness. The Branches provide and hold meetings, lectures and other activities in each area. To become a member, complete the form below and mail it along with your cheque or money order (payable to the Human Ecology Foundation of Canada) for $20.00 to: The Human Ecology Foundation of Canada, P.O. Box 11428, Station H. Nepean, Ontario, Canada, K2H 7V1.

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